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HAMILTON COLLEGE,
CLINTON, June 23, 1863.

DEAR SIR:—The Faculty of this Institution desire to make to you a brief statement in regard to the conduct and present position of a majority of the members of the Junior Class. On Tuesday, early in the afternoon, a committee from the class waited on the President, and requested to have their lessons in German shortened. They stated that their instructor in that department had at their request shortened the lesson for a single time, and then lengthened it; and that he refused to entertain the request to shorten it again. The President informed them that the Instructor was the proper person to judge of the average ability of the class to get a lesson, but that he would converse with him on the subject as soon as it was convenient. He accordingly sought an interview with the Tutor, but did not find him in time to have the result mentioned to the committee before the afternoon recitation. The great majority of the class, without waiting for a response to their request, refused to go into the recitation, many of them assembling at the door of the recitation room and acting in a most disorderly manner. They thus assumed the attitude of resistance to the legitimate authority of the College, and determined to dictate to the Instructor what lessons they would and what they would not learn.

On Thursday morning they presented a request to the Faculty to have the lesson shortened, stating also that the Tutor had treated them uncivilly in not entertaining their petition. The Faculty, having other special business to transact, did not at that time get through the consideration of this matter and deferred their final action until evening. Without waiting for this action, a majority of the class again refnsed to go into recitation, and assembled at the hour near the door of the room, cheering and disturbiug all the classes. This action was agreed upon in class-meeting and a combination formed to force the Instructor and the Faculty to yield to their demands, with the pledge given that if any of their number were sent off the rest would leave. They thus assumed to control the Faculty and bring them to their terms, by an illegal combination. All this occurred without giving the Faculty time to consider the matter, and before a word had been said to them officially. They thus took the attitude of open and combined rebellion against the College authority. It subsequently appeared that the real ground of their action was not so much the purpose of having a single verse less given in

the German, as the idea that in refusing to do this, the Instructor had not treated them civilly. This personal matter, which would have been at once settled by a proper communication with the President, was made the real ground of a combination.

The Faculty, on Thursday evening, in view of the circumstances of the case then before them, suspended two of the persons engaged in this action, and gave a warning to the others. They did this on the principle commonly acted upon in civil life, where numbers have combined to resist the authority of the State—to make an example of a few, and thus endeavor to save the many. One of the persons thus suspended, in addition to being very active in this affair, had been suspended previously for bad conduct. The other, although perhaps not one of the originators of the movement, had been quite influential in sustaining it. The Faculty hoped by thus dealing with them, to lead the majority to see the inevitable results of their conduct, and return to their duties. But in this they were disappointed. Under the pledge to stand by each other in this matter, the more unscrupulous—some of whom, for irregularities would have been obliged to leave College—held those who acknowledged that they had done wrong in thus resisting the constituted authorities. The majority immediately gave up all their College exercises.

On Saturday, in answer to an enquiry on what terms the Faculty would receive them back, it was stated that the Faculty simply required them to return to their duties and repose proper confidence in them for kind and equitable treatment, and that they could not give any pledges as conditions for the return of those in rebellion. On Monday morning a paper was presented to each member of the Faculty, signed by a committee, stating that the Class had annulled all combinations and decided to return to their allegiance, and that they presented two points for the consideration of the Faculty. 1st, the improper conduct of the Instructor in German, and 2nd, the case of the two suspended members, and requesting the Faculty to meet the Class after the Rhetorical exercise, at noon and hear any other explanations they had to make. The Faculty, in reply, expressed their gratification at the expressed purpose of the Class to return to their allegiance and stated that it was not their custom, as a Faculty, to meet the whole Class, but that they would meet them in the usual way, through a

committee, on Wednesday morning. Immediately on the reception of this answer, nearly half of the Class at once decided to leave College, and requested dismissions for that purpose. By this action they showed that they had no intention of really returning to their allegiance, unless the Faculty would at once comply with their demands. In view of this action on their part, the Faculty decided last evening, (Monday,) that all members of the Class who did not return to their duties by Friday afternoon, (26th inst.,) without a reasonable excuse for their absence, should be indefinitely suspended.

This is a plain statement of the facts in the case. We leave you to judge whether the Faculty have not acted with all the leniency which a proper respect for themselves and regard for the good order of this Institution would authorize. When students enter this College they place themselves under obligations to respect the constituted authorities, obey the laws, and if they have grievances, to seek redress for them in a proper manner. These young men have failed to do this. They have refused to wait until the Faculty acted in their case; they have openly violated the laws, and sought redress for whatever grievances they might have had, by illegally combining to compel the Faculty to obey their dictation. The principle involved is vital to the well being and good order of the State and of all our Institutions. In regard to the special matters of complaint, it is sufficient to say that as to the first and only one presented originally to the Faculty for their action, the lessons were not as long as some previous classes have had; and as to the 2nd, that the Instructor has stood ready, whenever the Class returned to their allegiance, to make such explanations as would be satisfactory to every honorable mind.

In behalf of the Faculty,

S. W. FISHER, *President.*

UTICA, June 25, 1863.

Rev. Dr. Fisher, President of Hamilton College:

DEAR SIR—We have received and carefully read your circular letter of the 23d inst., "in regard to the conduct and present position of a majority of the members of of the Junior class." Upon the request of a gentleman deeply interested in this matter, we have also heard a statement of facts, respecting the subject of the circular, properly and candidly made to us by five of the members whom you refer to. Being thus informed, we are of the opinion that the class were entirely wrong in the mode which they took to obtain redress of their alleged grievances. In reference to those grievances, it is unnecessary to say anything. If admitted to be such as stated, and of such a character as to justify a demand for redress, our opinion would not, thereby, be affected. No matter what was their character, the members of the class were unjustifiable in refusing to attend their usual exercises, and in forming a combination, the object of which must have been to compel the Faculty to accede to their demands; and, (notwithstanding the right step which they took in "annulling all combinations and returning to their allegiance,") they were especially wrong in deciding to leave College on Monday morning, (the 23d,) without waiting for the result of the meeting of the Faculty with a Committee of the Class, which had been promised for Wednesday morning.

It seems to us, (as is claimed in the circular,) that the Faculty have acted "with all the leniency which a proper respect for themselves, and regard for the good order of the Institution would authorize;" that their proceedings have been right and just; and that their authority should be sustained without impairment, or possible question. This can only be secured by the unconditional submission of the recusant members to that authority.

We observe that the Faculty determined that all the members of the class who did not return to their duties by Friday afternoon, (the 26th inst.,) without a reasonable excuse for their absence, should be indefinitely suspended. In the hope and earnest wish that those absent members may be convinced that duty to their friends and themselves, and to the cause of education and good order, demands their return in the manner required—we suggest, and take the liberty to request, that the time

given for the return, be prolonged to Monday, the 6th of July—the condition of their reception being that they shall resume all their duties, and place themselves upon the ground of "unconditional allegiance." By thus resuming a position which, it seems to us, was unwisely abandoned, they will place themselves right on the record; and it may be safely assumed, will be in an attitude to ask and expect a just consideration of their alleged grievances. We say this in the utmost kindness to them, and with no other feeling than that of upholding rightful authority, and consulting what is really their highest interest.

We are, dear sir, very respectfully yours,

P. H. FOWLER,
WM. J. BACON,
E. A WETMORE.

HAMILTON COLLEGE,
CLINTON, June 26, '63.

Dear Sir:—The Faculty have acceded to the request of the Trustees whose names are signed to the above.

SAM'L W. FISHER,
President.